

## **Program for Children with Severe Disabilities (CDFA No. 84.086)**

### **I. Legislation**

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, Section 624 (20 U.S.C. 1424) expired September 30, 1995; operated under the authority of the appropriations act in FY 1996.

### **II. Funding History**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1974	\$2,247,000	1990	\$5,819,000
1975	2,826,000	1991	7,869,000
1980	5,000,000	1992	8,000,000
1985	4,300,000	1993	9,330,000
1986	4,785,000	1994	9,330,000
1987	5,300,000	1995	10,030,000
1988	5,361,000	1996	10,030,000
1989	5,297,000		

### **III. Analysis of Program Performance**

#### **A. Goals and Objectives**

To improve early intervention, special education, related services, and integration for children with severe disabilities by supporting research, development, demonstration, training, dissemination, and statewide systems change activities that address their needs.

#### **B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals**

##### **Services Supported**

Support of projects that promote state-wide systems change accounted for almost half (\$4,400,000), of FY 1996 funding. These projects, in conjunction with IDEA, Part B state plans, include activities to improve the quality of special education and related services in the state for children and youth with severe disabilities (including children with deaf-blindness), and to change the delivery of these services from segregated to integrated environments. The projects must identify resources available in the state and must establish services needed to improve services in regular education settings. In FY 1996, 11 new outreach projects were awarded to serve children with severe disabilities; 31 continuation projects were also supported.

Awards made in FY 1996 included grants and cooperative agreements to support activities and services in the following general categories:

1. State-wide Systems Change (18 continuation cooperative agreements).

2. Outreach: Serving Children with Severe Disabilities in Integrated Environments 11 new grants and three continuation grants)
3. Model Inservice Training Projects (three continuation grants)
4. Developing Innovations for Education Children with Severe Disabilities Full- time in General Education Settings (five continuation grants)
5. Social Relationships Research Institute for Children and Youth with Severe Disabilities (one continuation cooperative agreement)
6. Inclusive Education Implementation Institute (one continuation cooperative agreement)

These projects provide a variety of services, including inservice training to teachers, related service personnel and administrators, local education agencies, and state education agencies. They also test solutions to specific problems in the delivery of special education and related services to students with severe disabilities. State-wide Systems Change grantees are required to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities, including their effectiveness in increasing the number of children in regular school settings alongside their same-aged, non-disabled peers. They must also evaluate and disseminate information about the project's outcomes.

Administrative program efforts in FY 1996 continued to focus on improving the capacity of state education systems to serve children with severe disabilities in less restrictive environments and on improving interventions in these environments. Program strategies continued to include priorities which support research activities, validated practices, demonstrations based on research methodology, outreach efforts using effective educational practices, and dissemination of best practices.

Programs continued to pursue management improvement strategies in FY 1993, including:

1. Disseminating project information through the development and ongoing use of a data-based information system. This information is accessible to all projects through the Federal Regional Resource Center, as well as the central office. In addition, an annual conference was held which focused on strategies for dissemination of project information.
2. Providing guidance to grantees in the preparation of interim and final project reports, review of these reports, and referral for their publication in the Council for Exceptional Children/Education Research Information Center (CEC/ERIC).
3. Providing specialized assistance in designing evaluation plans and instrumentation.

### **C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness**

Under development.

#### **IV. Planned Studies**

None.

#### **V. Sources of Information**

1. Seventeenth Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of the IDEA (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1995).
2. Evaluation of the IDEA Discretionary Programs Goal Evaluation: Final Field Activities Report: Program for Children with Severe Disabilities (Washington, DC: COSMOS Corporation, July 1993).
3. The Second National Symposium on Effective Communication for Children and Youth with Severe Disabilities: Topic Papers, Reader's Guide and Videotape (McLean, VA: Interstate Research Associates, May 1993).
4. Program files.

#### **VI. Contacts for Further Information**

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